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ABSTRACT

This report summarizes the findings of a study of the professional development or inservice training needs of experienced teachers in the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS). An introduction to the findings of the survey is devoted to a discussion of the teachers' perceptions of the important factors that influence their teaching in DCPS. Chief among these factors were what is viewed by the teachers as the difficult working conditions in the school system and the perceived high levels of teacher stress and burnout. Findings are reported on responses to interviews with 32 teachers and 16 administrators a survey questionnaire completed by 400 randomly selected DCPS teachers. Questions centered on: (1) What factors appear to influence teacher participation in staff development or inservice programs currently operated by the DCPS? (2) What staff development topics are of interest to experienced teachers in DCPS? (3) What methods of program delivery, including format, are preferred by teachers in DCPS? and (4) What rewards or incentives are perceived necessary to motivate teachers to participate in DCPS staff development programs? Specific recommendations are made for action or policy in developing inservice programs. A 27-page literature review comprises the appendix. (JD)

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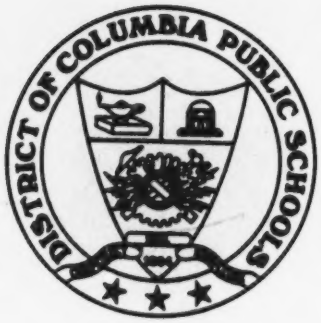

A REPORT ON A STUDY OF THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF EXPERIENCED, TENURED TEACHERS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Andrew E. Jenkins, III

Superintendent of Schools

Chief State School Officer

May 1988

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THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF EXPERIENCED TEACHERS

A REPORT OF A STUDY OF THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF EXPERIENCED, TENURED TEACHERS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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May 1988

Table of Contents

	Page
Executive Summary	iv
I. Introduction	1
Methodology	
II. Findings	5
Teachers' Views About Their Working Conditions	7
Staff Development Needs of Tenured Teachers	9
Staff Development Topics of Interest to Teachers	11
III. Recommendations	22
Appendix	
Literature Review	26

List of Tables

Table 1

Teachers' Preferences for Staff Development Topics 12

Table 2

Teachers' Ratings of Level of Interest in Sample Programs 13

Table 3

Preferred Options for Staff Development Program Delivery 17

Table 4

Teacher Preferences for Staff Development Formats 18

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a summary of the main findings and recommendations resulting from a study of the inservice or professional development needs of experienced, tenured teachers in the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) conducted during the spring of 1987. The purpose of this study was to examine the professional development needs of tenured, experienced teachers in order to determine the types of formats of preferred staff development programs, the topics of interest to tenured teachers, and the incentives and rewards that might be needed to encourage teachers to participate in such programs.

Individual interviews were conducted with 32 teachers selected at random from among 16 schools chosen to participate in the study. Administrators at each of the 16 schools were also interviewed for this study. Additional insights regarding the inservice needs of teachers were obtained from interviews conducted with supervisors from the three regional offices and the staff and director of the Division of Staff Development. In addition to these interviews, 400 randomly selected DCPS teachers completed a staff development questionnaire designed especially for this study. A modified version of this questionnaire was also administered to all Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) and Secondary School Progress Plan (SSPP) chairpersons. An extensive review of the literature regarding teacher inservice was conducted.

FINDINGS

The main findings from this study include the following:

The Staff Development Connection

Teacher inservice and staff development programs are viewed by DCPS teachers and administrators alike as loosely connected to the other important organizational units in the school system that impact on the classroom. For example, those interviewed for this study saw little coordination between the various DCPS efforts to improve instruction and its staff development offerings. The teachers view the current staff development programs as one-shot workshops that have not been coordinated or linked to the various school improvement initiatives currently being implemented in DCPS. Principals and regional office supervisors cited the lack of any real connection between the teacher evaluation process used in the school system and staff development activities as a significant negative factor influencing teacher participation in staff development programs.

Staff Development Organization in DCPS

The participants in this study have suggested the need to return to local schools some of the responsibility for planning and conducting staff development programs. Experienced teachers primarily want staff development programs that offer them opportunities to discuss and share professional concerns and techniques with each other. They also want staff development programs that support their own school's particular efforts at instructional improvement and school reform. To the extent possible, they believe that staff development programs should be tailored to meet the needs of the faculty at each school and that the school's professional staff, teachers and administrators, ought to be given the opportunity (and the resources needed) to plan and to carry out staff development initiatives.

Staff Development Topics of Interest to Teachers

The interview and survey data from this study point to strong teacher interest in staff development programs that focus on the exchange among teachers of new teaching techniques and the sharing of teaching materials. These data also suggest that experienced teachers prefer staff development programs that provide them with opportunities to update their knowledge of the subject matter they teach. There was not much interest in programs that cover topics related to student discipline, classroom management techniques, or other issues concerned with the management of students. What the teachers especially prefer are workshops that use DCPS teachers as leaders or presenters and that allow for discussion among the participants of the ideas or methods covered in the workshop. Most of the teachers believed that these types of workshops are most successful when they are planned and delivered at the local school.

Format Preferences

The study findings suggest that DCPS sponsored summer institutes, especially those that carry university credit, garner the most interest among tenured teachers. Adding participant stipends and tuition assistance makes the summer institute format even more attractive to this group of teachers. Providing teachers with full or half-day released time and substitute coverage to allow them to participate in District-wide or regional staff development programs is a second attractive option. What was clearly not a preference was offering workshops and staff development programs after school hours or on weekends. The teachers were adamant about not scheduling staff development activities that interfere with family life and responsibilities (i.e., after school or on weekends).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study strongly suggest a need to review the balance of staff development responsibility that currently exists among the Division of Staff Development, the regional superintendencies and the individual schools. Currently, staff development functions are primarily handled as a staff responsibility in the system with, apparently, little articulation with the line functions of the system. This study suggests a major outcome of this organizational pattern is a high level of frustration with centrally planned and coordinated staff development programs, especially among teachers who believe the activities are often irrelevant to their professional development needs.

Specifically, this study suggests the following recommendations for action or policy:

1. A management audit should be conducted to determine the extent of coordination between the Division of Staff Development and the instructional or supervisory staff at the regional and central offices.

This needs assessment did not set out to look at the extent of coordination and cooperation between the Office of Staff Development and the various DCPS organizational units concerned with instruction and school improvement. What we found, however, was that the teachers, principals, and instructional supervisors included in this study nearly uniformly expressed concern about, what they view, as the frequent loose connection between the Division of Staff Development and the other important organizational units in the school system. Principals, especially, expressed a desire to see more conjoint action and common focus between the various DCPS efforts to improve instruction and the staff development offerings. These perceptions, however, need confirmation. An organizational audit would examine the extent of coordination and cooperation and suggest means of increasing it. If the observations of this study are confirmed then the need to act on the following three suggestions take on even greater urgency.

2. Greater responsibility for staff development and teacher inservice should be returned to the individual schools. Central office and regional personnel, including the Division of Staff Development, should be used to support local school planning and delivery of staff development.

The issues of professional isolation and the perceived lack of opportunities for collegial interaction at the building level

deserve special attention here. The overriding theme pulled out of the teacher interviews was that difficult working conditions, high levels of personal stress among teachers, and the professional isolation of teachers from one another, are all linked to a general disinterest among DCPS teachers toward the staff development programs currently offered. Teachers, principals, and regional staff interviewed for this study suggest the need to return to the local schools the responsibility for planning and conducting staff development programs. Experienced teachers in the school system, primarily, want more opportunities to discuss and share professional concerns with each other. They believe the best way to do this is to provide each school with the resources and the responsibility for planning such school-based programs. The school system should consider a policy that requires each principal, in conjunction with the teachers, to develop a school staff development plan. The plan should cover a 24 month period and should show some linkage to other on-going school improvement initiatives underway in the school. Most important, the plan should demonstrate significant teacher involvement in planning for and delivering staff development activities. The Division of Staff Development should provide schools with resources and assistance in developing these plans and should assist them in carrying out the staff development activities. Each school's efforts to implement its staff development plan should be monitored and evaluated; principals should be held accountable for the quality of the school's staff development efforts.

What is suggested here is a very different pattern from the top down mode of decision-making concerning staff development currently found in the system. However, we are not so naive as to suggest the DCPS "let a thousand flowers bloom" as an approach to staff development. According to the research in this realm, the correlation between what teachers perceive to be their professional development needs and their actual needs is weak at best. However, teachers are good at determining areas of weakness within their own schools, and with proper support, teachers working on staff development programs have proven to be an effective school improvement catalyst within their own buildings.

Therefore, what we are suggesting is an approach to staff development that is much more integrated with the overall school improvement strategy of the DCPS. There is a role for the Central Office and the Division of Staff Development, in particular, in determining the improvement needs of the DCPS. But the implementation of the diverse local responses to that overall vision should be the responsibility of the individual schools. This response should be overseen from the regional offices. Support for local school efforts, in the form of expert technical assistance and the identification of other external

resources should be the responsibility of the Division of Staff Development.

3. A portion of the resources currently allocated to support the Office of Staff Development should be reallocated to the schools to support school-based staff development efforts. A process should be created to allow schools to apply for funds, substitute spaces, or other resources needed to conduct school-based staff development programs. These funds should be distributed on a competitive basis, with the best proposals receiving the resources available.

4. Teacher panels or committees should be created in each of the regions to advise the Division of Staff Development regarding teacher interests and needs for system-wide inservice programs.

Regional panels made up of teachers appointed by the regional Assistant Superintendents could be charged with conducting on-going needs assessment activities to identify topics for system-wide staff development programs. These same panels could be used to help identify common needs among individual schools for school-based inservice programs. These panels also would help to create a formal mechanism for evaluation of staff development programs.

5. Staff development programs sponsored by the Division of Staff Development or the regional offices should offer experienced teachers opportunities to examine alternative teaching strategies and techniques or update their subject matter knowledge.

The two topics of highest interest to the tenured teachers included in this study were "new teaching strategies or techniques" and "updating subject matter knowledge". There was considerably less interest in topics related to classroom management, student discipline, student testing, or new research findings. What is equally important is that tenured teachers want to hear about new teaching strategies or techniques from their peers, not necessarily from experts inside or outside of the school system. A part of this recommendation then is to offer District or region-wide workshops that use DCPS teachers as presenters and seminar leaders.

The teachers were adamant about the value of on-going, multi-session workshops that explore a topic in-depth as the preferred format. One of their biggest criticisms was that staff development programs in DCPS are frequently one-shot, short term programs that only skim the surface of a topic.

6. The District should offer intensive summer institutes as one of the main forms of staff development for tenured teachers.

The teachers' major preference for ongoing staff development formats were for DCPS or university-sponsored summer institutes,

coupled with provisions for tuition assistance and some form of stipend as incentives. They clearly wanted university credit for their staff development involvement. The survey results and the teacher interviews point to this form of staff development as the most attractive to experienced teachers in the school system. In contrast, offering workshops and inservice programs after school hours or on weekends was not viewed positively by the majority of the teachers in this study.

The use of half and full-day released-time workshops and programs also is a viable format for the delivery of staff development to tenured teachers.

I. INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the findings of a study of the professional development or inservice training needs of experienced, tenured teachers in the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) conducted during the Spring of 1987. The analysis, conjointly conducted by the Division of Quality Assurance and the Division of Staff Development, was designed to address several important questions relating to the professional development needs of tenured teachers. Those questions were:

1. What factors appear to influence teacher participation in staff development or inservice programs currently operated by the DCPS?

2. What staff development topics are of interest to experienced teachers in DCPS?

3. What methods of program delivery, including format, are preferred by teachers in DCPS?

4. What rewards or incentives are perceived necessary to motivate teachers to participate in DCPS staff development programs?

Methodology

The study used descriptive research methods to obtain the perceptions of a sample of experienced classroom teachers, resource teachers, principals, and DCPS staff development experts regarding needed staff development programs. Two strategies for

data collection were employed: (1) interviews with samples of each of the groups outlined above; and (2) surveys of a large sample of DCPS teachers. These data collection efforts were supplanted by an extensive review of the literature and research concerning effective inservice/staff development programs for teachers. Following are descriptions of each of the data collection methods and the literature review process:

1. Interviews

(a) Interviews with a Sample of Tenured Teachers

Sixteen schools were randomly selected from the four DCPS regions: eight elementary, four junior high, and four senior high schools. Two classroom teachers per school were randomly selected for individual interviews from lists of tenured teachers provided by the building principals. In the elementary schools, one teacher from the early grades (k-3) and one from the intermediate grades were selected to participate in the interviews. In the sampled secondary schools, teachers representing the sciences, mathematics, and humanities were randomly selected from the list provided by the school principal.

One hour individual interviews were scheduled with each of the selected teachers. To minimize classroom disruption, substitute teachers relieved the selected classroom teachers during the interview. A semi-structured interview protocol guided the interviewer. Responses to the questions posed were recorded on the protocol by the interviewer for later content

analysis. The teachers were asked to discuss the following areas:

- o their experiences with staff development programs in DCPS;
- o their perceptions of major problems, concerns, and on-the-job difficulties that could become the focus of staff development programs;
- o their suggestions about what the school system could provide to motivate teachers and reinforce their commitment to teaching;
- o rewards and incentives associated with participating in DCPS staff development programs; and
- o the types of staff development programs and delivery or format preferred.

(b) Individual Interviews with Building Principals

The study also included individual interviews with ten building principals and four assistant principals of the selected schools. Each of the interviews lasted approximately one hour, focusing on the principal's perceptions of the inservice needs of the tenured teachers in their buildings. In addition, principals were asked about the rewards and incentives they perceive as necessary to motivate tenured teachers to actively participate in staff development programs, as well as their views regarding effective methods of staff development delivery for experienced teachers in the system.

(c) Individual Interviews with Staff Development Providers

The third component of the study methodology consisted of individual interviews with the District's staff development providers, including the director and four members of the Division of Staff Development, and the director of the Teacher

Center. These interviews served to inform the research team about the mission, function, and activities of the Office, and about the current staff development delivery system in DCPS. The interviews also were designed to obtain information about plans or initiatives for new staff development programs.

(d) Individual Interviews with Regional Supervisors

Five regional supervisors, from three different regions in DCPS, were interviewed for this study. The purpose of these interviews was to gain another perspective on the staff development needs of tenured teachers in the system. During the interviews, the supervisors were asked to describe the services they typically provide to teachers and to discuss their views of what tenured teachers need in order to improve both the practice and the quality of their teaching.

2. Survey of Tenured Teachers

A questionnaire was designed for administration to a sample of tenured teachers randomly selected from a list of teachers with three or more years of service in DCPS. Four hundred teachers responded to the questionnaire. In addition 88 Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) and Secondary School Progress Plan (SSPP) chairpersons completed a slightly modified version of the questionnaire. The survey was constructed to obtain background data on each of the respondents, interest ratings on potential topics for future staff development programs, and preference ratings for staff development delivery formats and program types. In addition, several open-ended questions were

posed to allow teachers to add topics or subjects for staff development not included elsewhere on the questionnaire.

3. Literature Review

An extensive review of the literature was conducted in preparation for this study. The review served as a basis for the development of the teacher interview and the questionnaire. In addition, the research on prevailing practices in the delivery of staff development was examined. The review specifically focused on examining the available research regarding effective practices or models for teacher staff development programming. A summary of the major findings of this literature review is presented in the Appendix.

II. FINDINGS

In this section of the report the findings of the study are presented and discussed. These findings represent a synthesis of the views of the sampled teachers, resource teachers, principals, and DCPS staff development personnel. Since the focus of this study was the teachers, the findings are mainly drawn from the interview data and results of the teacher questionnaires. Where appropriate, the viewpoints of the principals, CBC and SSPP chairpersons, and the staff development personnel have been integrated with those of the teachers. At other times, the results for these groups are reported separately. A complete set of recommendations follows this section.

This introduction to the "Findings" section is devoted to a

discussion of the teachers' perceptions of the important factors that influence their teaching in DCPS.

Chief among these factors is what is viewed by the teachers as the difficult working conditions in the school system and the perceived high levels of teacher stress and "burnout". As originally designed, the study did not focus on working conditions or the other contextual factors that appear to influence teacher attitudes. However, the interview data and, to some extent, the questionnaire results are clearly affected by the negative attitudes teachers hold regarding the context in which they work. In particular, the interviews with teachers revealed an overriding concern for working conditions and a corresponding disinterest in participating in District-sponsored inservice or staff development programs. For the most part, the teachers interviewed wanted to talk about the physical facilities and the social contexts in which they work, not about their needs for further professional development and growth. Perhaps the most important finding of this study was that efforts to develop inservice or staff development programs for teachers in DCPS cannot be fully effective until the larger issues of teacher stress, burnout, and professional isolation are dealt with.

Because of this, we have chosen to first present a brief discussion of the teacher's views regarding their working conditions and professional lives, before presenting the findings more specifically related to staff development programming. This discussion is offered with some caution because of the small

number of teachers (32) included in the interview portion of this study. However, subsequent interviews with the principals, the resource teachers, and the regional supervisors included in the study corroborate this main finding. In addition, the written comments of teachers to items in the questionnaire frequently reflected their concerns for working conditions, morale, and what they perceive as the lack of opportunities for professional interaction with colleagues.

Teachers' Views About Their Working Conditions

The tenured teachers in this sample displayed a decided disinterest in DCPS sponsored inservice and staff development programs and a reluctance to participate in any staff development needs assessment efforts. The teachers interviewed for this study suggested that the reason for this is that the main problems they experience in their teaching are not lack of pedagogical skill, inadequate preparation in the subject matter they teach, or the complexity of the curriculum, but rather the physical and social conditions under which they work. Staff development programs offered in the past have focused on pedagogical issues and school improvement initiatives such as the CBC project and the introduction of computers into the school system. These programs have not been viewed by the teachers as targeted on their highest priority needs, which include bringing about changes in the physical and professional contexts in which they work. The most frequently cited problem areas included:

- inadequate physical facilities, including classrooms and buildings in need of repair and maintenance, poor lab facilities, and what are viewed as unsafe conditions;
- excessive and duplicative paper work requirements;
- burdensome non-instructional duties and excessive administrative demands that take time away from teaching;
- insufficient planning time;
- large classes, coupled with the demands of special needs students; and
- lack of teaching materials, books, and other instructional tools.

In addition, the teachers complained of increased feelings of professional isolation, a lack of opportunities for professional interaction with colleagues, and what they viewed as a lack of support from administrators and support personnel in the schools. Seventeen of the 32 teachers interviewed specifically mentioned feelings of personal stress and burnout as a major component of their professional lives. The teachers also mentioned what they perceive to be a contagious low level of morale among the teachers in their schools as a major source of stress and dissatisfaction. These perceptions were echoed by the principals and regional supervisors interviewed for this study, who viewed teacher stress, burnout, and low morale among DCPS teachers as major problem areas for experienced, tenured teachers.

The issues of professional isolation and the perceived lack of opportunities for collegial interaction at the building level deserve special attention here. The teachers included in this set of interviews, and to a large extent the principals and regional

supervisors interviewed, frequently cited the professional isolation of teachers from one another and their exclusion from the decision making processes, especially those related to teacher inservice, as a major source of dissatisfaction among teachers in the school system. As one of the teachers eloquently put it:

> "We receive no recognition or reward for our hard work. Our motivation is low as a direct reaction to the way we are treated by the system. They keep telling us we are doing everything wrong, nothing is right. We receive continuous pressure and insults... Building a trusting relationship between the administration and the teachers is necessary...There is a lack of meaningful teacher participation in decision making... Senior teachers want to know if they are making a difference; they need positive feedback, recognition, a pat on the shoulder."

Staff Development Needs of Tenured Teachers

In this section we present and discuss findings related to the perceived needs for staff development programs for tenured teachers. The discussion is organized around the four evaluation questions outlined in the "Introduction" to this report.

The survey and interview data indicate that DCPS tenured teachers participate in a variety of staff development or inservice activities. The data show that, on the average, teachers participate in about four inservice/staff development programs each year. There was, however, considerable variation among the teachers with regard to this number. Many teachers reported participating in practically no activities during the past year (1986-87); others reported almost monthly participation

in some type of staff development activity. The most representative statistic is that two-thirds of the respondents reported participating in between three and five staff development activities during the past year.

The interview and survey data show that most of the staff development activities in which teachers reported participating were one-time programs focusing on discrete topics; there were few examples of thematically related, multi-session programs, offered over a period of time. About half of the reported activities were described as school-based, usually in the form of a monthly staff meeting covering a particular topic, with the topic changing each month. About 30 percent of the reported activities were region or central office-sponsored activities, including Division of Staff Development workshops and Teacher Center programs. Twenty percent of the reported activities were described as system-wide staff development activities (i.e., Teacher's Convention), non-system sponsored workshops and conferences, and public or community conferences/workshops.

Three of the 32 teachers interviewed for this study reported participating in the actual planning and/or development of the staff development programs in which they had participated in the past year.

Staff Development Topics of Interest to Teachers

Table 1 presents an analysis of the survey responses regarding the staff development topics of interest to the tenured teachers. Opportunities to examine and to learn about new teaching techniques was the most frequently listed topic (44%). Sixty-one percent of the teachers indicated they would "definitely participate" in staff development activities related to new instructional techniques. Analysis of the survey responses and the interview data quite clearly shows the teachers' high level of interest in focused, multi-session programs directly related to teaching techniques. Such sessions would include opportunities for teachers to share techniques and instructional approaches with one another-- a recurring theme in this analysis of staff development needs.

Related to this, hands-on workshops to develop classroom instructional materials also was a popular topic, especially among the elementary teachers. Fifty-one percent of the survey respondents indicated that they would "definitely participate" in such staff development programs. The underlying theme is that programs that permit teachers to expand their knowledge of instructional techniques, especially those in which DCPS teachers share their professional expertise, are especially attractive to the tenured teacher in the system. The literature review clearly supports the finding that increased opportunities for

professional contact and the exchange of pedagogical techniques are of most interest to experienced teachers.

TABLE 1

TEACHERS' PREFERENCES FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT TOPICS

	Rand Order of Topic	Percent
1.	New Teaching Techniques	44%
2.	Workshops to Develop Instructional Materials	37%
3.	Updating or Reviewing Subject Matter/Content	32%
4.	Using Computers or other Technology in Teaching	11%
5.	Managing the Classroom	9%
6.	Student Discipline	9%
7.	Student Motivation Techniques	6%
8.	Examining Current Research on Classroom Management	5%
9.	Student Assessment, Counseling Techniques, Drug Abuse	2%
10.	Other: (includes topics of personal interest)	22%

TABLE 2

TEACHERS' RATINGS OF LEVEL OF INTEREST IN SAMPLE PROGRAMS

Topic	"Would Definitely Participate"
Examining current research on classroom management techniques	16%
Learning about effective methods for managing classroom discipline problems	11%
Exploring new teaching techniques and methods	61%
Updating or reviewing subject matter in content fields	52%
Learning new techniques for developing classroom materials and instructional aids	51%
Learning how to use computers or other new technology in teaching	56%

Almost 22 percent of the teachers' responses could be categorized as expressions of interest in custom made staff development programs. For example, survey respondents listed topics such as video taping lessons, how to write college recommendations for students, and working with children of drug addicted parents, as potential future topics for inservice. Many of the topics falling into this category had to do with "teaching

techniques" (i.e., using computers in math, small group work, using the media center). The combination of this category of topics with the category labeled "new teaching techniques" serves to underscore the teachers' perceptions regarding the importance of staff development programs that focus on examining alternative teaching techniques or strategies. The number and frequency of such individual topics is an interesting finding in that it reflects the need teachers feel for individualized, highly focused opportunities for professional development. It also reinforces the findings from the literature of the importance of offering staff development programs at the local school level, where programs can be tailored to the felt needs of the staff or a group of teachers.

Teachers also expressed considerable interest in staff development programs that help them update their knowledge of the subject matter they teach. Nearly a third of the survey respondents listed content or subject matter topics as preferred topics for future staff development programs. In addition, 52 percent of the respondents said they would "definitely participate" in staff development programs that focus on updating or reviewing subject matter in content fields. A slightly larger proportion of secondary teachers (63%) favored subject matter-oriented programs than their elementary colleagues, but there was still considerable interest among the elementary teachers for workshops and programs dealing with the content of the curriculum--especially social studies and science topics.

About 11 percent of the teachers indicated that inservice related to the use of computers in the classroom was of interest to them as a focus for inservice programs. In addition, nearly 56 percent of the survey respondents said they would "definitely participate" in future staff development programs devoted to computers and computer technology. However, many respondents and a sizable number of the teachers interviewed for this study, indicated that such inservice must go beyond computer "literacy" to address how to extend the use of computers in teaching. Secondary teachers, in particular, asked for more hands-on, practical training in the use of computers in teaching.

Classroom management as a topic was not a high interest subject for the tenured teachers in this study. Only nine percent of the survey respondents favored staff development programs that would address classroom management issues. Those teachers included in the interviews also rated staff development topics related to classroom management themes as of low interest. Similarly, nine percent of the survey respondents indicated interest in staff development programs focused on student discipline and even fewer teachers (6%) were interested in student motivation techniques as a topic for inservice programs.

Preferred Types of Staff Development Programs

The tenured teachers in DCPS indicated a preference to use their summer breaks to pursue professional development activities. Nearly two-thirds (61%) of the survey respondents

indicated they would "definitely participate" in DCPS-sponsored summer workshops and institutes that offer stipends for teachers; an additional 27 percent said they "probably would participate" in such summer programs (Table 3).

Similarly, university-sponsored summer workshops and institutes also were viewed by tenured teachers as a preferred option for staff development programs. About 42 percent said they would "definitely participate" in summer programs sponsored by universities, while an additional 40 percent thought they "probably would participate". Nearly 38 percent of the teachers indicated they preferred an intensive, one- or two-week summer workshop format versus other options for offering summer programs. These data, together, suggest that programming summer workshops and institutes would generate considerable interest among the teachers in the system, particularly when these opportunities are coupled with stipends and/or tuition assistance. Opportunities to participate in summer programs were especially attractive to secondary teachers.

Staff development programs that offer released time for teachers to observe in other classrooms were favored by 78 percent of the teachers, 44 percent indicated they would "definitely participate" if such programs were offered. In addition, nearly two-thirds of the teachers (62%) said they would participate in peer coaching programs, although a smaller proportion (21%) indicated they would "definitely participate". Moreover, the teachers, principals, and supervisors interviewed

for this study believed these kinds of programs offer excellent growth opportunities for the tenured teacher because they reduce the isolation among teachers and encourage peer contact.

Many of the teachers indicated a preference for on-going staff development programs, versus single topic, one-shot programs. In addition, they requested more follow-up activities, especially more opportunities to observe the application of principles covered in workshops in demonstration lessons in actual classrooms.

TABLE 3.

PREFERRED OPTIONS FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM DELIVERY

Option	"Would Definitely Participate"
Programs that offer opportunities for teachers to voluntarily receive on-going coaching and feedback about their teaching from another experienced teacher	21%
Programs that offer opportunities with released time for teachers to observe other classroom teachers in their school or in another school in the District	44%
DCPS-sponsored summer workshops and institutes, with stipends for teachers	60%
University-sponsored summer workshops and institutes, with tuition assistance	42%
DCPS-sponsored courses offered during the school year, with inservice credit	35%
University-sponsored courses offered during the school year, with tuition assistance	41%

With regard to formats for offering staff development programs during the school year, the teachers prefer released-

time options to after-school and Saturday programs that offer extra pay (Table 4). In particular, the tenured teachers appeared to prefer full and half-day released time programs to options that call for after-school or weekend participation, even when these latter options involve extra pay. It was clear from the interviews that teachers do not wish to participate in programs offered at the expense of their personal time. As one of the principals put it: "if staff development is perceived as an important function by the administration then it has to be given 'prime time' and you need to set aside time from the school day. Otherwise, its an "add-on" for the teachers."

TABLE 4.

TEACHER PREFERENCES FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT FORMATS

Ranked Order of Preferred Format	Best or Acceptable	Not Acceptable
1. Full-day, released-time programs	88%	12%
2. Half-day, released-time programs	79%	21%
3. One-two week summer workshop	70%	30%
4. After school programs, with pay	63%	37%
5. Weekend workshops, with pay	54%	46%
6. Saturday programs, with pay	52%	48%

What rewards and incentives are needed to encourage teachers to participate in staff development programs?

The teachers, principals, and supervisors interviewed for this study were asked to discuss the types of incentives and rewards needed to encourage tenured teachers in DCPS to participate in staff development programs. While offering released time and monetary incentives was viewed by these groups as necessary incentives, they were not viewed as powerful enough to overtake the high levels of job dissatisfaction and burnout that serve as important disincentives to participation in staff

development among the tenured teachers in the system. Most of the teachers interviewed (26 out of 32), and a large proportion of the administrators and regional supervisors, indicated that meaningful involvement was the most important incentive, yet few believed that classroom teachers were meaningfully involved in the planning and delivery of staff development programs in the school system. This finding is consistent with the literature on staff development which identifies teacher involvement as the single most important incentive to effective participation in staff development efforts. The teachers interviewed were adamant about changing the locus of staff development programming from its current central office and regional focus to the local school. The teachers cited the need to identify the particular teacher needs at each school and use this information as the basis for planning staff development programs. They also urged setting aside leadership roles for teachers in each school to conduct needs assessment and staff development planning activities.

Offering released time to tenured teachers in DCPS to encourage participation in staff development programs also appears to be an important incentive. Nearly three-fourths (21) of the teachers and seven of the 10 principals interviewed for this study viewed "released time" as a potentially important mechanism for encouraging teacher participation. The survey results also underscore the teacher views about released time as a viable incentive (see Tables 3 and 4).

Monetary incentives, such as tuition assistance, stipends, or extra pay, also were viewed as strong incentives, but apparently less powerful than offering teachers released time. Fewer than a fourth of the teachers interviewed mentioned monetary incentives directly, although the idea of offering tuition assistance for graduate coursework or receiving extra pay for participating in after-school or weekend workshops appealed to more than half of the teachers responding to the survey (see Table 4). The principals and regional staff interviewed also suggested that monetary incentives can play an important role in encouraging teachers to participate in staff development programs, but they view teachers as being less concerned about getting paid for their participation and more concerned about the relevance of the programs and time frames in which they are offered.

One of the interesting findings of this study was that about a third of the teachers interviewed (11 out of 32) suggested using participation in staff development programs as an element in the teacher evaluation process and/or as a criterion for selecting teachers for promotion to administrative or supervisory positions. Whether the teachers meant "participation" in the planning or delivery of staff development or "attendance" at staff development programs is unclear and needs further clarification.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study strongly suggest a need to review the balance of staff development responsibility that currently exists among the Division of Staff Development, the regional superintendencies and the individual schools. Currently, staff development functions are handled, primarily, as a staff responsibility in the system with, apparently, insufficient articulation with the line functions of the system. This study suggests a major outcome of this organizational pattern is a high level of frustration with centrally planned and coordinated staff development programs, especially among teachers who charge the activities are irrelevant to their professional development needs.

Specifically, this study suggests the following recommendations for action or policy:

1. A management audit should be conducted to determine the extent of coordination between the Division of Staff Development and the instructional or supervisory staff at the regional and central offices.

This needs assessment did not set out to look at the extent of coordination and cooperation between the Office of Staff Development and the various DCPS organizational units concerned with instruction and school improvement. What we found, however, was that the teachers, principals, and instructional supervisors included in this study nearly uniformly expressed concern about, what they view, as the frequent loose connection between the Division of Staff Development and the other important organizational units in the school system. Principals, especially, expressed a desire to see more conjoint action and common focus between the various DCPS efforts to improve instruction and the staff development offerings. These perceptions, however, need confirmation. An organizational audit would examine the extent of coordination and cooperation and suggest means of increasing it. If the observations of this study

are confirmed then the need to act on the following three suggestions take on even greater urgency.

2. Greater responsibility for staff development and teacher inservice should be returned to the individual schools. Central office and regional personnel, including the Division of Staff Development, should be used to support local school planning and delivery of staff development.

The issues of professional isolation and the perceived lack of opportunities for collegial interaction at the building level deserve special attention here. The overriding theme pulled out of the teacher interviews was that difficult working conditions, high levels of personal stress among teachers, and the professional isolation of teachers from one another, are all linked to a general disinterest among teachers in DCPS toward the staff development programs currently offered. Teachers, principals, and regional staff interviewed for this study suggest the need to return to the local schools the responsibility for planning and conducting staff development programs. Experienced teachers in the school system, primarily, want more opportunities to discuss and share professional concerns with each other. They believe the best way to do this is to provide each school with the resources and the responsibility for planning such school-based programs. The school system should consider a policy that requires each principal, in conjunction with the teachers, to include a staff development section in the school's Annual Instructional Plan. This section should cover a 24 month period and should show some linkage to other on-going school improvement initiatives underway in the school. Most important, the plan should demonstrate significant teacher involvement in planning for and delivering staff development activities. The Division of Staff Development should provide schools with resources and assistance in developing these plans and should assist them in carrying out the staff development activities. Each school's efforts to implement its staff development plan should be monitored and evaluated; principals should be held accountable for the quality of the school's staff development efforts.

What we have suggested here is a very different pattern from the top down mode of decision-making concerning staff development we currently find in the system. However, we are not so naive as to suggest the District "let a thousand flowers bloom" as an approach to staff development. According to the research in this realm the correlation between teacher perceived needs and teaching practices proven to be effective in facilitating student achievement, is weak at best. However, teachers are good at determining areas of weakness within their own schools, and with proper support, teachers working on staff development programs have been demonstrated to be an effective school improvement catalyst within their own buildings.

Therefore, what we are suggesting is an approach to staff development that is much more integrated in the overall school improvement strategy of the system. There is a role for the central office and the Division of Staff Development, in particular, in determining the improvement needs of the District of Columbia. But the implementation of the diverse local responses to that overall vision should be the responsibility of the individual schools. This response should be overseen from the regional offices. Support for local school efforts, in the form of expert technical assistance and the identification of other external resources should be the responsibility of the Division of Staff Development.

3. A portion of the resources currently allocated to support the Office of Staff Development should be reallocated to the schools to support school-based staff development efforts. A process should be created to allow schools to apply for funds, substitute spaces, or other resources needed to conduct school-based staff development programs. These funds should be distributed on a competitive basis, with the best proposals receiving the resources available.

4. Teacher panels or committees should be created in each of the regions to advise the Division of Staff Development regarding teacher interests and needs for system-wide inservice programs.

Regional panels made up of teachers appointed by the regional Assistant Superintendents could be tasked with conducting on-going needs assessment activities to identify topics for system-wide staff development programs. These same panels could be used to help identify common needs among individual schools for school-based inservice programs. These panels also would help to create a formal mechanism for evaluation of staff development programs.

6. Staff development programs sponsored by the Division of Staff Development or the regional offices should offer experienced teachers opportunities to examine alternative teaching strategies and techniques or update their subject matter knowledge.

The two topics of highest interest to the tenured teachers included in this study were "new teaching strategies or techniques" and "updating subject matter knowledge". There was considerably less interest in topics related to classroom management, student discipline, student testing, or new research findings. What is equally important is that tenured teachers want to hear about new teaching strategies or techniques from their peers, not necessarily from experts inside or outside of the school system. A part of this recommendation then is to offer District or region-wide workshops that use DCPS teachers as presenters and seminar leaders.

The teachers were adamant about the value of on-going, multi-session workshops that explore a topic in-depth and over time as the preferred format. One of their biggest criticisms was that staff development programs in DCPS are frequently one-shot, short term programs that only skim the surface of a topic.

7. The District should offer university-sponsored summer institutes as one of the main forms of staff development for tenured teachers.

The teachers' major preference for ongoing staff development formats were for university-sponsored summer institutes, coupled with provisions for tuition assistance and some form of stipend as incentives. They clearly wanted university credit for their staff development involvement. The survey results and the teacher interviews point to this form of staff development as the most attractive to experienced teachers in the school system. In contrast, offering workshops and inservice programs after school hours or on weekends was not viewed positively by the majority of the teachers in this study.

The use of half and full-day released-time workshops and programs also is a viable format for the delivery of staff development to tenured teachers.

Appendix

LITERATURE REVIEW

When school districts completed the education of the baby boom generation, the make-up of the teaching work force underwent a major change. As a result of declining enrollments and dramatic reductions in the number of new positions that have to be filled, school districts increasingly have found themselves staffed with a stable cadre of experienced, tenured, and older teachers. Galambos (1985) states that only five percent of teachers in any one year are newly trained. As the makeup of the teaching work force changed, the drive to improve the quality of staff development gained nationwide momentum. More than ever before, stakeholders in public education are looking towards staff development programs to stimulate, motivate, recharge, reinforce, and update the knowledge of thousands of currently employed tenured teachers. (McLaughlin and Marsh, 1978; Howell, 1980; Leibs, 1983; Cooper and Jones, 1984; Galambos, 1985.) At the same time the "baby boom echo" of the late 1980s will increase the demand for new teachers and require school districts to spend part of their energies and resources inducting these new teachers into the profession.

The major purpose of this literature review was to survey the prevalent patterns of staff development, to examine problems that are common to most programs, and to identify effective staff development practices that have been supported and validated by available research. This review supplements the data furnished by the DCPS study with findings from other studies across the nation. It also expands the data base available to support decisions regarding the planning and delivery of future staff development programs.

Prevailing Patterns of Professional Development

The literature suggests that most staff development activities are fragmented and lack a conceptual framework. The current focus is on general professional development issues relating to the instructional process and developing teachers' knowledge and skills, rather than on the improvement of specific instructional outcomes or school programs. Most staff development programs are characterized as a "hodgepodge of quick fixes" that do not follow a comprehensive long-term plan. Activities simply accumulate over time in response to a variety of external factors. Inservice has been described as a non-system which is piecemeal, sporadic, event oriented, and offered in "a cafeteria" style (Koelling 1981, in Cooper and Jones, 1984). Inservice objectives are often fragmented, rather unambitious, the focus being the enhancement of teachers' routine practices rather than bringing about broad improvement or large-scale changes in basic approaches to instruction. (Johnson,

1980; Gall et. al. 1984; Fielding, 1986; Schalock, 1984 and Arends, 1983 in Fielding, 1986.)

The most common format of staff development is the after-school workshop. Enrollment in graduate courses and one or two "inservice days" per year are also typical patterns of staff development (Yarger et. al., 1977, in Howey et. al., 1985; Fielding, 1986).

Two major forms of staff development have been identified by Mertens (1982):

> **Form I** is supported through school **district provision of time** for teachers to engage in inservice activities. Endorsed by the state Education Department, the primary example...is the "Superintendent's Day" on which districts close their schools and require that all teachers engage in district-organized staff development ... less commonly, individual teachers are relieved by substitutes from teaching duties to pursue independently arranged activities, for example, visitation to other teachers' classrooms.
>
> **Form II** is supported through districts **financially subsidizing** professional development activities which carry college graduate credits. In some instances, districts provide direct subsidy through assuming the registration costs for teachers enrolling in courses. More typically, districts provide indirect subsidy, in that, teacher advancement on district salary scales is almost always related to the accumulation of college credits. Teachers engage in this form of inservice on their own time, but participation is mandatory to the extent that it affects the teacher's certification and position on district salary scales. (Cited in Howey et. al., pp. 79-80)

In a survey of inservice offerings in Oregon, Gall and his associates found great variations in amount and type of inservice participation across teachers. The amount of staff development time in which teachers were engaged varied between 12 to 250 hours annually. While many of these activities were focused

specifically on improving instruction, many remained loosely connected in terms of their actual impact on practice (Gall et. al., 1984).

Training programs that focus on empirically supported instructional processes have recently gained popularity throughout the nation, especially the staff development packages developed by Hunter ("Instructional Theory into Practice") and Stallings ("Effective Use of Time"). The Hunter model is being widely implemented in hundreds of schools across the country. Furthermore, research indicates that increasing attempts are being made to provide specific demonstration, feedback, and follow-up activities in the classroom, the contents of which are empirically based on the models. While these efforts have been more systematic than the "hit and miss", "one-shot" approaches, they raise a major concern that they are: (1) proceeding with a narrow focus, ignoring the context-specific and somewhat limited nature of the empirical research used to support their packages, (2) focusing on basic skills in which teachers feel that they are already skilled, and (3) overly emphasizing the technical aspect of teaching at the expense of its interpersonal/cognitive aspects (Gall et. al. 1984; Howey et. al. 1985). Another concern is that such programs may fail to stimulate and motivate experienced teachers whose needs are different from those of fresh graduates, and who, after five to seven years of teaching, want to explore new areas and take more responsibility for their own professional growth (McLaughlin and Marsh, 1987; Duke, 1986).

Common Problems of Staff Development

Although the importance of staff development has been widely recognized by key actors within school systems, and extensive efforts have been placed on staff development in many school districts, the literature reviewed points to the many problems that are still common to most staff development efforts. Some of these problems relate to the context of staff development; others relate to the way staff development programs and activities are planned and implemented.

Contextual Problems

The school environment has been characterized as a "loosely coupled" system, meaning that various organizational units are separated from and incompletely connected to each other. What happens in one area has no predictable impact on another, and various members of the school community follow separate agendas and respond to different goals and interests. The existence of such a contextual situation for staff development has been widely identified by research findings (Moore and Hyde, 1981; Cyphert, 1981; Schlecty, et. al., 1983, Gall et. al., 1984; Lanier, 1984; Fielding, 1986; Little, 1986). These authors point to the minimal coordination and communication between the various subdivisions within the school system, the weak, or lack of a, relationship between staff development and teacher evaluation, and the exclusion of staff development from a coherent, deliberate policy or institutional priority. Such contextual factors have contributed to the inability of those

responsible for staff development to maintain direction in staff development programs, and to control the resources necessary to support that action (Schlecty et. al., 1983).

In a study of staff development in three large urban school districts, Moore and Hyde (1981) found that the responsibility for staff development was dispersed among a large number of people and departments. The focus and design of inservice efforts in these districts reflected a lack of deliberate planning and clear policy initiatives. Noting that the majority of staff development offerings remain one-shot workshops and activities that are loosely coupled to assessment, priority goals, educational R&D, and improvement of schools as systems, Gall and associates (1984) write:

> If this interpretation is correct, it means that much or all of current inservice education is not designed to improve student achievement or to improve the total school organization. What then is the purpose of inservice education? We can only speculate on the answer to this question here. Our hunch is that inservice education, however it is originally conceived, becomes bent to the prevailing patterns of school system functioning. Inservice appears largely designed to be unintrusive and undemanding of teachers. It reinforces prevailing curriculum and instruction, and it is not intended to alter them in any fundamental way. The focus of inservice instruction on the instructional process rather than instructional outcomes is a major indicator that it is not intended to challenge the prevailing system. Another indicator of lack of challenge is the fact that teachers feel adequately prepared in the majority of inservice activities even before they begin participation. (p.8.)

Along similar lines, Schlecty et al (1983) argue that the way schools are presently organized places pressure on the staff development enterprise to keep things from getting worse and distracts attention from the intended purpose of staff

development, which is to make things better. Therefore, until this "maintenance" kind of approach is considerably enriched, there is little likelihood that change-oriented staff development can succeed. The authors suggest that staff development is a complex process whose causal relationship with some forms of student outcomes are not fully understood. They also caution that staff development is only one small component of those actions and activities in schools that have effects on students.

The physical and conceptual distance between staff development and school buildings is a problem according to many experts. Staff development has had a district-wide focus and as such it has been distant not only from the needs of teachers but also from the operating environments of school buildings (Edelfelt and Lawrence, 1975, in Cooper and Jones, 1984; Wood and Thompson, 1980). Other observers suggest that staff development has also been lacking the sensitivity to the cultural dimension and the climate of the school context (McLaughlin and Marsh, 1987; Ward, 1985, in Fielding, 1986). Staff development seldom takes into account the contextual norms that exert so much influence in schools and classrooms Fielding, 1986).

Finally, one commonly cited contextual problem has been time and money. In a recent survey 267 superintendents of school districts from the fifty states were asked "what is the biggest problem in providing meaningful staff development?" Time to schedule activities was cited as a major obstacle by 45 percent of the respondents; 19 percent indicated inadequate financial

support; and 18 percent cited changing attitudes toward staff development. This study also showed that 23 percent of the sampled districts allocated less that $1.50 per student for teacher inservice; 30 percent allocated less that $5.00; and 33 percent allocated more than $8.00 per student (Thompson and Cooley, 1986). It must be noted that these figures represent only direct expenditures for staff development and do not include the "hidden costs" of staff development such as released time, the use of substitute teachers, and other similar categories of expense incurred by inservice activities.

Moore and Hyde (1981) in their study of three very large metropolitan school districts concluded that actual costs of staff development can be fifty to sixty times higher than those reported, accounting for as much as three to six percent of the total operating budgets of school systems.

Implementation Problems

Staff development is viewed by many as a change process. Therefore, it is argued that most of the prevailing problems of current staff development programs are caused by the failure to apply effective strategies in the planning and implementation phases of the change effort (Bentzen, 1974; McLaughlin and Marsh, 1987; Hall, 1981; Griffin, 1982; Little, 1984; Howey and others, 1985).

Most commonly, one finds a top-down approach and a lack of participation and involvement of teachers in the planning and implementation of staff development activities (Wood and

Thompson, 1980; Griffin, 1982; Cooper and Jones, 1984). As a result, teachers perceive a disregard for their needs and are, consequently, uncommitted to the change. In one of the surveys of outstanding inservice programs, Thompson and Cooley (1986) reported that while four out of five district superintendents indicated that teacher input for staff development is important, in practice, less than half of these same school districts solicited input from teachers. Teacher input was greatest in school districts with enrollment of less than 25,000.

Closely related to the lack of involvement are the common feelings of teachers that staff development is irrelevant to their day-to-day needs (Johnson, 1980 in Cooper and Jones, 1984). It is suggested that inservice education has become an institutional response to institutionalized requirements or to prescriptive legislation, rather than an opportunity for teachers to develop professionally. Many observers note that the content of staff development is often determined by the perceptions of an authority figure in the school system (Houston, 1980; Griffin, 1982; Schlecty, 1983). Where needs assessments have been conducted at all, they have tended to be unsystematic and highly subjective (Harris, 1980, in Cooper and Jones, 1984). Some states have been targeting their inservice programs primarily at achieving basic student competencies with minimal consideration for the specific needs of teachers (Cooper and Jones, 1984). As a result of such practices there has been a proliferation of programs that are impersonal and that do not reflect the

individual needs of teachers at the various stage of their careers, especially those of the experienced teachers.

One of the most commonly cited problems of staff development programs is their deficiency-oriented approach to teacher development (McLaughlin and Marsh, 1978; Schlecty et. al., 1983; Edelfelt and Lawrence, 1975 in Cooper and Jones, 1984; Howey et. al. 1985). In this deficit model teachers are seen as needing in-service because they lack professional skills. The emphasis in most of these programs appears to be on remediating teachers' weaknesses. The orientation, according to McLaughlin and Marsh (1987), has two major elements that need to be understood.

First, the deficit model is a collective view supported by a large set of various groups including school district administrators, principals, different groups of education policy makers and legislators, and university professors. It is suggested that this leaves teachers with the belief that every one is critical of them; a series of administrative regulations, credential requirements, university degrees requirement, and various state laws act as powerful reinforcers of this belief. Secondly, teachers have been excluded from discussions of their "deficit" or how to remedy them; remediation in this model is based on the "the dogmatic belief" of other educators that they know what constitutes good teaching. This model reflects a lack of confidence in the professional judgement of teachers and implies that they are not to be trusted with the responsibility for determining their own needs and priorities.

The deficiency-oriented approach to inservice coupled with the predominant lecture, information-given style of delivery used in staff development, violates the basic principles of adult training. As such, this approach is responsible to a large extent for the negative feelings and the great resistance that experienced teachers have toward staff development (Wood and Thompson, 1980; Cooper and Jones, 1984). Finally, one problem that appears to be universal to staff development programs, but which has started to improve recently, is the lack of on-the-job-follow up and support services, a shortcoming that impedes the adoption of new practices in the classroom (Cooper and Jones, 1984; Gall and others, 1984; Howey et. al., 1985). In the absence of staff-support activities, very few innovations or changes can become internalized and adopted to the degree of having an impact on practice. (McLaughlin and Marsh 1978)

Research Findings on Effective Staff Development Practices

Sparks (1983) describes staff development as a "nested process" that includes the context, goals and content, and training process, all of which are critical considerations in the planning and development of effective staff development programs. These components have been the primary focus of major research studies in the field. Therefore, this section will review major findings under each of these components of staff development.

Research on Context Variables

The power of the context to influence the direction and the results of staff development efforts has been well documented in

the research literature. Griffin (1982) observes that it is now axiomatic that the characteristics of settings in which staff development takes place strongly influence the success of the staff development effort. Many researchers have concluded that a number of contextual variables exert tremendous influence upon the degree of success of staff development programs. Contextual variables that facilitate the success of staff development programs are: institutional leadership; organizational climate; and conditions of service, including participant's motivation and commitment (Bentzen, 1974; Berman and McLaughlin, 1978; McLaughlin and Marsh, 1978; Lawrence, et. al, 1974, 1980; Yarger et. al. 1980; Lieberman and Miller, 1981; Little, 1981; Griffin, 1982; Schlecty and Others, 1983; Sparks, 1983; Howey, et. al, 1985).

Institutional leadership encompasses three levels: the project leadership; building level leadership with a central focus on the building principal; and "downtown" district administration leadership. Research underscores the importance of visible leadership at all of these three levels. Studies show that the more effective the project director is, in the view of teachers, the more successful the program is in achieving its goals. However, the evidence indicates that the impact of effective project leadership is a short-term and limited one; it has no relationship to the continuation of the change effort or to teacher change. (McLaughlin and Marsh, 1978; Berman and McLaughlin, 1978).

Central office support is critical to program success in two ways; first, the explicit support and interest of the central administrators is very important to the teachers' willingness to work hard on changing their practices. Secondly, central office support expressed through the provision of technical and financial assistance, and, most importantly, through the provision of released time, is necessary for the adequate involvement of teachers in their professional development effort. Central level support is essential for the long-term effectiveness of staff development programs.

The support and active leadership of the building principal has been established as one of the most critical elements of successful staff development programs. The principal's active participation in the various phases of the training activities is one way of exhibiting leadership and support. Schlecty (1983) and his colleagues observed that in schools where there was heavy involvement in building level initiated activities, or wide participation in system-sponsored activities, the building principal played an active and assertive role in procuring resources, scheduling meetings, and becoming directly involved as a participant or as an instructor. In his case study of a very large urban school system, Schlecty (1983) asserts:

> Not a single instance was observed in which widespread participation in a staff development activity occurred at the building level <u>without</u> the support of the principal... the absence of principal support may preclude the implementation of systematic staff development programs, but the commitment of the principal to this or that program did not seem to be sufficient to guarantee its implementation." (p. 26).

In addition to the principal's support, what is equally important to the success of staff development programs at the local level is the school building climate. The findings of McLaughlin and Marsh (1979) show that the quality of the school's organizational climate influenced the quality of the project relationships; a supportive school environment tended to be more effective in implementing and sustaining change efforts. They defined organizational climate in terms of whether teachers felt their school was a good school to work in, was efficient, and was managed effectively by the principal.

Similarly, Little (1981) suggests that two school operation norms appear to be critical to school success and have a direct impact upon the effectiveness of staff development. First, "the norm of collegiality", in which teachers routinely work together and have expectations for shared discussions and shared work; second, "the norm of continuous improvement", whereby analysis, evaluation, and experimentation are perceived by teachers as the basic tools of the profession. Moreover, a supportive environment allows teachers time to participate in the program. Little (1981) concludes that:

> One can speculate that the school as an organized work place is sufficiently powerful to govern the nature and the extent of innovation, quite apart from the merits of the innovation itself or the way in which it is packaged" (p. 4).

Finally, teachers' motivation and commitment is an essential ingredient to a successful staff development program. McLaughlin and Marsh (1987) stress in their findings that "the importance of

teachers' commitment to the achievement of project goals is axiomatic: Project success is unlikely unless teachers want to work hard to make it happen." However, teachers' commitment and motivation is not an "immutable" contextual factor; it can be influenced by a number of program planning and implementation strategies which will be discussed below.

Given all the above findings regarding the importance of supportive contexts of staff development, the question is: how can these contexts be created? The answer to this question lies in the design and implementation of collaborative staff development models that are in most instances school-based. (McLaughlin and Marsh, 1987, Lawrence and Harrison, 1980; Wood, Thompson, and Russell, 1981; Little, 1981; Schlecty, 1983; Sparks, et. al, 1985). The most commonly observed strengths of these models is not only the improvement of the participant teachers' knowledge and skills, but also the opportunity provided the teachers to have responsibility for staff development and an improved school climate. The major element shared by these models is that the primary responsibility for the planning and implementation of staff development is given to the local school staff, with outside assistance provided when needed. One such example is the REPTIM model (Wood and Thompson, 1980) used by the Professional Development and Program Improvement Center of the Long Beach Unified School District of California. Wood and his colleagues trained the school district personnel in the use of the five steps of the model: Readiness, Training, Planning,

Implementation, and Maintenance. Another example is the Staff Development for School Improvement model, which has been implemented in over fifty schools in the Detroit metropolitan area (Sparks et. al., 1985; Jennings and Lake, 1986).

Research on Variables Related to Goals and Content

In recent years a new trend has emerged which links the goals and content of staff development programs to research findings on teacher effectiveness and to a basic skills orientation or an emphasis on pedagogical development. Many experts have concluded that a body of research now exists which clarifies what constitutes good teaching and that this can be used to shape the content of staff development programs. However, because this approach is not diverse enough to accommodate the multiple needs and interests of the different groups of teachers, staff development must have a more comprehensive and holistic approach. Howey and his colleagues (1985) identified five major related goals that might be addressed in a well-conceived staff development program, and that contribute indirectly, but in a powerful way, to the basic goal of improving instruction: Teacher personal development, teacher cognitive development, teacher theoretical development, teacher career development, and teacher professional development.

Programs related to the teacher's personal development help teachers understand change, particularly personal change, and assist teachers in changing their patterns of behavior. The

major emphasis is on the teacher as a person, and on a better understanding of the self and teaching as an interpersonal activity. The goal of personal/professional development, which relates closely to adult developmental concerns, needs to be more fully addressed in staff development programs. Teachers are more likely to perceive staff development relating to individual developmental needs as professionally fulfilling and personally rewarding (Krupp, 1986).

According to McLaughlin and Marsh (1978), teachers seem to peak after five to seven years of teaching; the passage of time on the job appears to diminish the teachers' capacity to change and to dampen their enthusiasm for creativity and for teaching. The authors strongly suggest that more experienced teachers may need a different approach to their professional growth, an approach that is more personal and one that emphasizes new cognitive frameworks. This view, which is shared by others (Cardinel, 1981; Liebes, 1983; Cooper and Jones 1984; Krupp, 1986), concludes that the emphasis on the teacher as a person should not be marginalized.

The second goal, the cognitive development goal, relates both to the enhancement of teachers' cognitive development and to the incorporation of cognitive theories into the design of staff development training programs. More work is still needed in this area; nevertheless some examples are provided in the literature, including the most recent works of Sprinthall and Theis-Sprinthall (1983) and Oja (1984). (see Howey, et. al., 1985.)

Teachers' theoretical and professional development refers to providing the opportunities for teachers to become involved in the application, testing, and analysis of existing teaching theories, as well as in the development and generation of new theories. Involving experienced teachers in collaborative research efforts with colleagues from colleges and universities is a major focus of such efforts. (Howey et. al., 1985).

Finally, staff development can contribute to the enhancement of teachers' careers and consequently to improving instructional outcomes. Staff development can create extended roles for more senior teachers by placing them in leadership roles for staff development. It provides more opportunities for experienced competent teachers to enhance their competence and show it to other adults, not only to students in the classroom (Schlecty et. al., 1983).

Comprehensive needs assessments in all the above areas, adult personal, professional, and cognitive development, in addition to school environmental conditions, and teachers' instructional behaviors, are all critical to the identification of the goals and content of staff development programs. Research can be used to diagnose concerns of different groups of participants, to determine the level of agreement among them regarding the focus of staff development, develop methodologically acceptable means of assessing teacher competence, determine preferred modes of delivering staff

development, and derive appropriate intervention strategies (Griffin, 1982).

The Concerns-Based Adoption Model developed by Hall and associates is a set of diagnostic tools that assesses the needs of a particular school setting with respect to staff development. This model identifies the concern of teachers at various stages of the training program or the change effort. Appropriate interventions are then designed to match these concerns. This model is recommended for use in building-based programs (Hall and Loucks, 1978, 1981).

Actual assessments of a teacher's classroom behavior are rarely used as a basis of needs assessments. The Stalling model (Stalling, 1981) uses an observation schedule that is based on "effectiveness variables" as a baseline from which improvement strategies are formulated, and subsequent staff development activities are determined.

In summary, the literature suggests that goal setting should be based on a multidimensional needs assessment and problem identification process. This process should involve teachers in identifying their needs and their problems in the personal, cognitive, theoretical and professional areas. (Hall and Loucks, 1981; Griffin, 1982; Howey et. al., 1985)

Research on the Process Variables Relating to Staff Development

Several processes that relate to the planning and implementation of staff development have been shown through research to be effective vehicles for the delivery of staff

development programs. The major processes will be discussed here.

Planning Processes

Research indicates that participative and collaborative approaches to the planning of staff development programs are necessary for the effective implementation of staff development efforts and the continuation of successful practices. Programs that adopt such strategies actively engage teachers and administrators from all levels as partners who share equal decision-making power throughout the various stages of program development. Teacher's participation in decisions about their own professional development not only improves the quality of programs but also gives teachers a certain sense of empowerment and a "sense of ownership" of the staff development efforts (Lawrence et. al. 1974; McLaughlin and Marsh, 1987; Berman and McLaughlin, 1978; Lawrence and Harrison, 1980; Griffin, 1982; Sparks, 1983).

The Rand Change Agent study (Berman and McLaughlin, 1978), which remains a classic in the field due to the scope and depth of its coverage, stresses other planning strategies that are essential prerequisites for successful change efforts. The scope of the change is an influential variable: the greater the change in terms of its complexity and impact, the greater the commitment and motivation of the participants. This may relate to the sense of empowerment with which such participation endows participants.

Specific skill training had only a short term effect; staff support activities in project decisions, when perceived as useful, had longer lasting effects. Another important variable is the extent to which teacher participants had a clear conceptual understanding of the change efforts. Teachers must have enough time, information, and ample opportunities for discussion in order for them to develop a clear road map to assimilate the change. (Berman and McLaughlin, 1987.)

Staff Development Training Activities and Processes

Based upon a synthesis of the research on effective training activities, Sparks describes several major types of activities that are critical components of an effective staff development design: diagnosing and prescribing; giving information and demonstrating; discussing applications, practice and feedback; peer observation; and coaching. These activities were also classified under "staff-support activities" in Berman and McLaughlan's (1978) change agent study. These staff-support activities, in particular classroom assistance from resource personnel and ongoing program meetings, provided the feedback necessary to individualize skill-specific training for various teachers. It also had a strong positive effect on teacher behavior change in the long term.

What these activities have in common is that they are embedded in the classroom and the school context in an ongoing fashion; they involve teachers in their own learning; they promote problem solving; and they are highly interactive. The

effectiveness of incorporating such activities in staff development is also reported in three major meta-analysis studies (Lawrence, et. al., 1974, 1980; Joyce and Showers, 1980). For maximum effectiveness, it is recommended that staff development planners use a combination of several, if not all, of these processes. Where teachers are expected to master new approaches, all of the above components appear to be needed. (Showers and Joyce, 1980.)

Diagnosing and prescribing increases the teacher's awareness of how they use their classroom time. Following a long observation session, teachers receive a detailed profile which includes recommendations for change. Teachers are then encouraged to select a few areas for change. Following the completion of their training, they receive further observations and a final profile. (Stallings and Others, 1978, in Sparks, 1983.)

The importance of providing clear information, theory presentation, and demonstrations of recommended practices is stressed in the findings of Joyce and Showers (1980). Demonstration may include live modeling, videotapes, and verbal illustrations, along with the use of training manuals. Modeling is an important component of any program aimed at the acquisition of complex skills and their transfer to the classroom.

Research also indicates that effective staff development programs incorporate opportunities for teachers to receive guided practice and feedback (Lawrence and Harrison, 1980; Joyce and

Showers, 1980). Feedback is defined as "a system for observing teaching behavior and providing an opportunity to reflect on teaching by using the system. Feedback can be self administered, provided by observers, or given by peers and coaches" (Joyce and Showers, 1980, p. 382). Guided practice and feedback are also the cornerstones of the experiential learning which has been shown to be the predominant mode of adult learning (Wood and Thompson, 1980).

When teachers are asked what they like best about staff development they frequently refer to the sharing and exchange of ideas with other colleagues (Holly, 1982 in Sparks, 1983). Providing the opportunity for teachers to discuss the application of effective practices recommended in training sessions is another crucial component of successful staff development programs. In his study of school change, Bentzen (1974) reported that the greatest improvements occurred when teachers discussed their instructional concerns and engaged in problem-solving activities. The basic theme in Bentzen's study (better known as the I/D/E/A study) is that "adults in schools must learn to help themselves; teaching tends to be a task done in isolation and teachers must learn to think together in dealing effectively with their problems" (Howey, et. al., 1985, p. 73). Processes of dialogue, decision-making, action, and evaluation, were believed by Bentzen and her colleagues to be central to the ability of school teachers to effect changes in their own behaviors and in their workplace; these were the same processes that were

operating in the schools most receptive to change and exhibiting extensive involvement. Moreover, the "peer group strategy" that was reported in the I/D/E/A study reflected the belief that if people in schools talk, act, decide, and reflect together in a systematic manner, it is likely that they will come to realize that solutions to their problems reside in themselves and in their environment. (Bentzen, 1974, in Griffin, 1982.)

As a result of the I/D/E/A study, designers of staff development programs started building into their training programs small discussion, problem-solving groups. This practice of building instructional support-groups appears to be productive, provided groups remain small in size. Sparks reports positive outcomes of programs that have incorporated this strategy (Sparks, 1983).

Successful staff development programs should also provide teachers with the opportunity to observe each other. Research has shown that peer observation is highly effective in helping teachers to become more aware of their own instructional behavior and to improve their ability to analyze the teaching process. Berman and McLaughlin, (1978) cited peer observation as a requisite component for successful change efforts. Sparks (1983), suggests that peer observation may help break down the "psychological walls" between classrooms, therefore decreasing the impact of loneliness that characterizes the practice of teaching.

Research by Joyce and Showers (1980, 1981, 1982) indicates that the study of theory, the observation of demonstrations, and practice with feedback, provided they are of high quality, are sufficient to enable most teachers to use a new model appropriately and with relative ease. However, the development of skill by itself does not ensure its transfer into practice on a regular basis in the classroom. What appears to be crucial to the completion of the training cycle is some kind of in-the-classroom follow-up and coaching

Coaching provides a non-threatening atmosphere for the practice of a new skill or approach. Following a period of training, coaches learn how to be good companions in the trying periods of change, how to give technical feedback to one another as they practice new skills, how to help one another analyze the application of new skills in the classroom, and finally, how to make specific plans to help the student adapt to the new teaching approach. Joyce and Showers, who are the major contributors to research on coaching, are great advocates of this process:

> If we had our way, all school faculties would be divided into two coaching teams who regularly observe one another's teaching and provide helpful information, feedback, and so forth. In short, we recommend the development of a "coaching environment" in which all personnel see themselves as one another's coaches (Joyce and Showers, 1982, p. 6).

The importance of coaching, according to Showers (1984), appears to extend beyond the facilitation of transfer: it promotes collegiality and enhances professional relationships among the teaching faculty.

Research Related to Incentives for Teacher Participation

Many questions have been raised in the literature about the utility of extrinsic rewards as a viable strategy to motivate teachers, especially older tenured teachers, to participate in staff development programs. A major finding in this area is that monetary incentives are ineffective motivators for older, more experienced teachers. This is particularly true of giving extra pay for attending staff development sessions. Teachers may appreciate the extra pay, but the pay alone will not motivate them to engage themselves in a meaningful way. What seems to be more important is their intrinsic or professional motivation, the kind that will be induced in teachers through the type of planning and training strategies discussed above (Berman and McLaughlin, 1978; McLaughlin and Marsh, 1987; Howey, et. al., 1985). Schlecty and his associates (1983) point out that the significance and relevance of any system of pay designed to induce teachers to engage in staff development is likely to have varying effects, depending on the teachers' present circumstances. For example, one of their findings was that older teachers were more concerned about time than pay. This confirms the finding of Lortie (in Marsh and McLaughlin, 1987) that many older teachers had shifted their energies to family or other outside interests, and therefore need more innovative approaches to re-engage them.

Released time for teachers is associated with effective staff development (Griffin, 1982; Cooper and Jones, 1984; Howey

et. al., 1985). Given that time is an important consideration for older teachers that often discourages them from attending after-school programs, released time can be an effective incentive for their participation.

Summary

A review of the research literature on staff development reveals that effective staff development exhibit the following characteristics:

1. Teachers are actively involved and have a prominent voice in the initiation, planning and delivery of their own staff development programs.

2. The school building is the core unit and nucleus of the staff development enterprise. Special attention is given to the creation of staff development groups within the school.

3. The building principal has a major role in the planning and delivery of staff development. The central administration can serve best in an advisory, supportive capacity.

4. Staff development activities are designed to respond to the problems and needs identified by the teachers themselves. Teachers play a major role in determining the staff development activities they need.

5. Staff development programs are comprehensive in the sense they address multiple interrelated goals such as personal, cognitive, theoretical and career development goals.

6. Staff development training processes are highly interactive and growth oriented, stress collegial sharing and discussions within and among schools, utilize group problem-solving approaches such as instructional support groups, and emphasize teachers strengths rather than their deficits.

7. Staff development is ongoing, long-term, and consists of a job embedded sequence of teacher-to-teacher training activities such as peer observation followed by discussion and feedback, and coaching and guided practice of new approaches, also followed by discussion and feedback.

Researchers believe that when the goals of staff development programs are clearly and broadly defined within a supportive context, and when multiple approaches are used to realize these goals, most of the aforementioned problems and obstacles to the meaningful growth and development of teachers will be eliminated.